

Tip # 1 Video

Hi, this is AJ Hoge, one of the directors of Learn Real English. And now I want to talk to you a little bit more about Rule #1. What is Rule #1? It is learn phrases not individual words. So, of course, what is a phrase? A phrase is a group of words, two or three or more words. So, that's Rule #1, it's very simple, very easy, that you need to learn phrases, phrases, phrases. Focus on phrases, not on individual words.

So this is pretty simple, right? But it's very powerful. And let me tell you why it's powerful. So I know you probably learned English with normal textbooks and in normal schools. And so you've probably studied a lot of individual English words, right? You have your vocabulary list. There would be one word and then there would be the meaning in your language, the translation. So, that's not so good. What we really want to do is learn phrases, groups of words, and there are a few reasons for that.

Number one, when you learn phrases, you are actually learning a little bit of grammar each time. Because what is grammar? Grammar really is the way that words go together. It's how we put words together and which words go together, right? So we know that "he" and "goes", those go together. He goes to the store. We don't say he go to the store, right? So we learn after time it's he goes, he goes, he goes. That's the correct phrase. You don't need to know about past and present. You don't need to know about first person, second person, third person. You don't need to think about all those grammar rules but what you do need to do is just know that these words go together. And how do you do that?

The easiest way is you just learn phrases. So when you find a new word for you, something that's new, in your notebook always write the words that it is with. Write the whole sentence or write the phrase that it is in. Very, very important. And then when you review your vocabulary, when you look at your notebook again, you never study just the one word. You always review and try to remember the whole phrase. And you learn the meaning of the whole phrase. When you do this, of course you're learning a lot of vocabulary, but you're also learning some grammar. But you're learning it in a more natural way, the way that native speakers learn it. So that's one of the big benefits of learning phrases instead of individual words. It's a very, very natural way to improve your grammar and to learn grammar. It's not the only way, there are other ways, too, and we'll talk about those in later rules. But it is certainly one way that's very powerful.

Another important thing about learning phrases, it's faster. Now we've got a lot of research studies, there's a lot of information about this and about learning phrases and learning individual words. And we find that when you learn phrases, when you focus on phrases, in fact you improve two to three to even five times faster using phrases instead of just individual words. So when you do this, again why is it so powerful? Because you're learning in groups of words.

If you study word by word, one word and then one word and then one word, it's not natural, right? When we speak we don't speak one word by one word by one word. We speak in groups of words. We speak in phrases. And in fact, this is how native speakers, you know, Americans or Canadians or British people,

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this is how we learn English. We always learn words in groups, almost never just one. And this is true for little children, too. Little children usually learn groups of words, chunks of words. And that's why they can learn so quickly. They're not studying one by one by one. They're learning whole groups of words. In the beginning they only know what the phrase means. Maybe they don't know every single word in the phrase, but they understand the whole meaning of the group. And then later, of course, as they learn more phrases they will begin to understand each individual word also.

This is a much faster way to learn a lot of vocabulary. It's also the best way to speak faster. When you're speaking if you think of each individual word, word by word by word, your speaking will usually be kind of slow. And it will sound unnatural because you're speaking word by word by word by word. You have these strange breaks when you're speaking. That's quite normal for a lot of students because they studied in schools, they used textbooks. The breaks, when they stop, when they pause, they sound very strange to an American, to a British person. They sound kind of unnatural. Because they learned individual words, not phrases. We learn phrases. When do we pause? When do we have a break? Well we break between phrases. That's what sounds natural.

So this will also increase your speaking speed. The more you study phrases the faster you will speak. And also your speaking will sound more natural to native speakers, to Americans, to Canadians, to Australians, etc. And that's very important. It will help other people understand you better.

So as you can see, there are a lot of very important benefits when you learn phrases instead of individual words. So this is very powerful but so, so simple. How do you use it? It's easy. Every time you hear a new word, every time you're reading and you see a new word, always write down the whole phrase. Write down the other words that are with it. When you review, when you look at your notebook again and you study a little bit...again you never study just the one word, always the whole group, always the phrases. That's it. Very simple, very easy and yet super powerful. So do this every every time that you learn something new with English, alright?

When you do this you're going to speak faster, you're going to learn three, four, five times faster. Everything will improve, even your grammar. Okay so that is all for today. That is all for Rule #1. We will see you next time. Thank you and have a great day. Bye-bye.